



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

MONTANA WOLF PROGRAM WEEKLY REPORT

To: Interested Parties

From: MFWP Wolf Program Coordinator, Carolyn Sime

Subject: Wolf Program Activities and Related Information, November 1 - 7, 2008

Contributors to the Montana Wolf Weekly are Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), Universities, USDA Wildlife Services (WS), the National Park Service (NPS; Glacier NP; Yellowstone National Park will be reported in the Wyoming Wolf Weekly), US Forest Service, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and the Blackfeet Nation.

Highlighted activities relate to: monitoring, wolf – livestock interactions, outreach and education, research, law enforcement, and other miscellaneous topics of public interest. The Weekly Report will be available on each Monday, covering the previous week. It and other wolf program information (including the 2007 annual report) can be found at: <http://fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/wolf/default.html>.

Wolf Monitoring Activities

Laudon began working in Glacier National Park on Nov. 1 to replace a GPS collar that had malfunctioned and prematurely dropped off a member of the Whitefish pack. The Whitefish and Kintla packs are being studied as a part of an Oregon State University graduate project by Christina Eisenburg. He caught two wolves on the 3rd. One received a GPS collar and the other a traditional VHF collar.

Flights: Laudon did a round of flights from October 24-29th. Ross flew in southwest Montana on Nov. 6.

FWP encourages hunters, landowners, and other outdoor enthusiasts to report wolves through the online reporting button or to send in one of the pre-printed postcards available at all FWP offices, many US Forest Service offices, and license providers throughout the state. Information provided by the public helps FWP more accurately monitor wolf numbers and distribution in Montana.

Wolf - Livestock Activities

On the 31st, WS confirmed that a calf was injured by a wolf or wolves on private property south of Butte. The calf was bitten in one hind quarter earlier in the week. Cattle have been moved from the property so no further actions are planned at this time.

On Nov. 1, WS investigated a dead 600 lb calf 20 miles west of Cascade. WS determined it was not wolf predation. No known packs or wolf reports have come from the area.

On Nov. 2, WS confirmed one ewe killed by wolves on north of Reed Point (same ranch as earlier losses this fall). The SOS permit and control for one wolf has been extended for 45 days starting Nov 2 and ending December 17, 2008.

On Nov 6, WS killed 2 Skalkaho wolves as part of ongoing control work to remove the remaining pack members. Tracks indicated the presence of a third wolf traveling with the 2 that were killed, but it was never seen. The last confirmed depredation was on September 24 and efforts to remove the last wolf will conclude Nov. 8th

Efforts to remove 2 wolves near Wisdom are ongoing. A total of 6 cows are confirmed killed and 1 cow has been confirmed injured and was taken to the vet. It is not expected to live.

Outreach and Education Activities

Sime gave presentations in Helena Capitol High School advanced biology / honors classes on the 5th to about 40 students.

Lance, Ross, Laudon, and Sime have been working (and will continue working) at various FWP hunter check stations to check game and talk with hunters. The 2008 Montana general big game season runs from October 26 to November 30.

Research Activities

Nothing to Report.

Law Enforcement and Related Activities

Back in July 2008, FWP reported that a dead pup had been recovered in the Squeezer pack territory. The carcass was taken to the FWP Wildlife Lab in Bozeman. Necropsy results concluded that its injuries were consistent with being hit by a vehicle.

Other

NEW -- Delisting Update:

On October 24, 2008 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced it is reopening the public comment period on its proposal to delist the gray wolf in the northern Rocky Mountains. Through a notice in the Federal Register scheduled to publish on October 28, 2008, USFWS is asking the public to provide comments and any additional information on the February 2007 proposal to delist wolves. The Service is seeking additional information on a variety of topics related to the delisting. More details are available in the Federal Register notice which will be posted along with associated materials at the Service's northern Rocky Mountains wolf website: <http://westerngraywolf.fws.gov>.

The public will have until November 28, 2008, to submit their comments to the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> or via U.S. mail or hand delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: RIN 1018-Au53; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 222; Arlington, VA 22203.

Current Management in Montana:

FWP, through an interagency cooperative agreement, is still the lead agency for all wolf conservation and management (within the bounds of federal regulations) so long as adequate federal funding continues to be made available. FWP will continue to monitor wolves, do public outreach, and guide and direct research activities. No public hunting or trapping is allowed. USDA Wildlife Services is still the agency to investigate causes of injured or dead livestock and carry out FWP's decisions to address conflicts, as guided by federal regulations. Montana will continue to stay involved in litigation and any future delisting developments and will continue to seek the most efficient, successful path to delisting. FWP will also continue its collaborative work with Montana Tribes, other state and federal agencies, and the Montana Livestock Loss Reduction and Mitigation Program.

Check the wolf pages on the FWP website for important information and updates:

<http://fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/wolf/default.html>.

Montana Livestock Loss Reduction & Mitigation Board:

Nothing to report.

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To learn more about Montana's wolf population, the Montana program and to help FWP monitor wolves by reporting wolf sign, visit FWP at: www.fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/wolf.

To anonymously report a dead or injured wolf or suspected illegal activity, call: 1-800-TIP-MONT.

To request an investigation of injured or dead livestock, call USDA Wildlife Services directly in western Montana / Helena area at 458-0106 or in eastern Montana / Columbus area at: 322-4303. Or call your nearest FWP representative to have your call referred to Wildlife Services.

If you have a confirmed or probable livestock loss due to wolves, USDA Wildlife Services will supply you with a copy of the Loss Reimbursement Application form. For more information, see <http://liv.mt.gov/liv/LM/index.asp>. Or, contact the Livestock Loss Reduction and Mitigation Program Coordinator George Edwards at the Montana Department of Livestock at 444-5609.